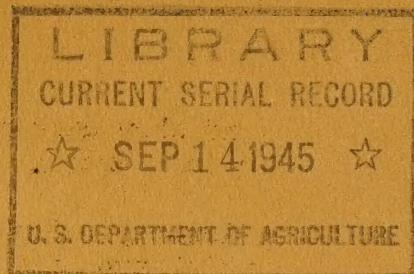


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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
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EXTRA CARE URGED IN HARVESTING, CURING PEANUTS

(This is the eighth in a series of "Grow More Peanuts per Acre" suggested press releases for joint use by State and county AAA and Extension Service.)

More peanuts per acre mean extra dollars in profit to farmers who take extra care in harvesting and curing their 1945 peanut crops, according to _____ (name), (county agent or AAA committeeman).

Peanuts are a vital war crop, _____ (name) pointed out, and the nation needs all the extra high quality peanuts that can be produced. Since farmers have planted every suitable acre in peanuts that is practical to do, the only way left to boost production is by producing more per acre. This, to a great extent, can be done by following the simple approved harvesting and curing methods.

"High quality peanuts --those that are bright in color, low in moisture, free of dirt--bring a premium on the market which often amounts to several dollars per ton," _____ (name) explained. "The grower just can't afford to let these extra dollars slip away when by following these simple steps he can save them:

1. Harvest peanuts at exactly the right time for maximum results.
2. Loosen peanuts from the soil with implements that will cut off and leave in the soil the greater portion of the root system which contains the nitrogen-bearing nodules.
3. Stack peanuts properly to insure good quality and to reduce losses.
4. Plant winter cover crops immediately on soil from which peanuts have been dug to prevent erosion and leaching."

A too early harvest results in many immature, poorly developed pods that contain partially developed kernels, _____ (name) said. On the other hand, delayed harvest causes peanuts to decay or to break off from the plants and be lost in the soil. As harvest time approaches, the grower should examine the pods frequently to determine if his crop is ready for harvest. The kernels should be full grown and the skins have a distinct texture, taking on the natural color of the variety. In addition, the interior of the shells should have begun to color

and show darkened veins. In any case, all peanuts should be harvested before frost.

Plow-type diggers or ordinary turning plows with special points which properly cut and loosen peanuts from the soil are now on the market. Regular machine potato diggers with elevators have proved satisfactory on reasonably dry soil, and if the crop is free from grass. Other similar elevator types of digger are also in extensive use, (name) said.

Peanuts should not be stacked until the foliage is well wilted but not brittle. This drying usually requires about 24 hours. They should be stacked around poles 8 to 9 feet long, pointed at the top, set 18 to 20 inches in the ground and thoroughly tamped, (name) explained.

The peanuts should be placed on cross pieces nailed to the poles about 15 inches above the ground, with the pods next to the pole, leaving a "flue" through which air can pass. The stack should not be over 3½ feet in diameter. The base of the plants toward the pole should be kept higher than the outside leaves so that rain will run off instead of into the stack. Grass, hay, or stack covers should be placed on top to keep rain from entering and to protect the peanuts from weather and birds.

Stacks should be built to the height of a man or a little higher so as to leave a smaller proportion of the crop exposed to weathering during curing. They should be inspected frequently throughout the curing period and any damage to stacks quickly repaired to prevent spoilage, (name) said.

Some close growing crops like small grain or winter legumes such as vetches, Austrian winter peas, or blue lupines, where adapted, provide good cover crops. These cover crops can be sown between the stacks promptly after harvest, and they can be turned under as green manure in the spring to add organic matter and fertility to the soil. These cover crops are particularly important now that some farmers haven't been able to keep up a regular system of crop rotation during the years of all-out war production.

AAA offers assistance for establishing a satisfactory cover of winter legumes. See your local AAA committeeman for further details.

This material was prepared jointly by Agricultural Adjustment Agency; Bureau of Plant Industry, Soils, and Agricultural Engineering; and the Extension Service.